

Introduction: In *Matthew 13: 10* Jesus' disciples asked Him why he spoke to the people in parables and in vs. 11-17 we have His reply, which teaches us a great deal about not only the parables but the sovereignty of God and the sinner's hard heart...

I. The Secrets (mysteries) of the Kingdom...

A. Often the word is used in reference to God's plan and purpose of salvation...

1. It can't be known apart from revelation from God...
2. The word does not mean mysterious or full of twists...
3. In the Bible It is used in reference to things revealed, not hidden... *Colossians 1:25-29 cf. I Timothy 3:16; Ephesians 3:1-6; Romans 11:25-32; I Corinthians 15:50-56*

Observation:

B. The Parables are given to set before us the mysteries (secrets) of the Kingdom of Heaven...

Sometimes they stress:

1. The individual and contrast the true believer with the counterfeit...
2. The Kingdoms value in the eyes of the true believer...
3. The Kingdoms scope and growth...
4. The Kingdoms consummation...

Application:

1. How do I know I am a Christian? In the Kingdom? Going to Heaven?
2. Learn a lesson about faith and the churches future...

II. God Gives Understanding...

A. To know the truth is a gift... *I Thessalonians 1:2-5a cf. John 6:44*

B. This understanding is sovereignly given...

1. It is not some sort of general assistance...
2. It is not equally given to all...

C. God has chosen who will be saved... *Matthew 11:25; John 10:14*

III. The Preservation and Perseverance of the True Christian...

A. God preserves those He causes to be Christians... *Philippians 1:6; II Corinthians 3:18; I Thessalonians 5:23-24; II Peter 1:3-4 cf. John 17:6, 11, 17*

B. God takes from those who remain in unbelief... *Matthew 13:12b; Luke 18:8*

1. Their knowledge of the truth...
2. Their professed standing... *Matthew 25:28-30*

Observation: There is no such thing as standing still...

III. The Twofold Effect of the Parables...

A. The negative effect... *Matthew 13:13-15 cf. Isaiah 6:9-10*

B. The Positive Effect... *Matthew 13:16-17*

Application: